



## City of Gaithersburg Press Release

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### For Immediate Release

### **Gaithersburg Celebrates Economic Development Week**

City Highlights Lakeforest Master Plan Outreach, Gaithersburg Biotech Companies

**Gaithersburg, MD (October 23, 2020)** The City of Gaithersburg's Office of Economic Development in partnership with the Maryland Economic Development Association (MEDA), celebrates the ninth annual economic development week in Maryland.

Celebrated Monday, October 19 through Friday, October 23, the weeklong event showcases how economic development transforms lives. Events and activities hosted by various economic development organizations are highlighting the efforts and initiatives that enhance business retention, job growth and quality of life for Maryland residents.

As part of these celebrations, the City is highlighting its virtual community-wide effort to add to the inventory of developable land by soliciting input on its Lakeforest Master Plan update that will help guide future development plans. The City invites the public to share their thoughts by attending one of six [virtual public forums](#) and completing an online survey [here](#). The forums take place on Thursday, October 29 at 10 a.m., 2 p.m. and 6:30 p.m., and Thursday, November 5 at 10 a.m., 2 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. Register for a forum [here](#).

The City also recognizes five Gaithersburg-based biotech companies that are hard at work creating a vaccine for COVID-19, including:

**Adaptive Phage Therapeutics (APT)**, a clinical-stage biotechnology company located at 22 Firstfield Road, recently announced that the Department of Defense (DoD) awarded APT \$9.8 million for research development of multiple high-priority vaccine candidates against the novel coronavirus. The effort will advance and evaluate vaccine candidates in Phase 1 clinical trials. APT is the only biotechnology company with a phage-based COVID-19 vaccine program projected to enter clinical trials in 2020.

**Altimmune**, located at 910 Clopper Road, has developed a single-dose intranasal vaccine candidate for COVID-19, designed to stimulate a broad immune response including both systemic immunity and local immunity in the nasal cavity and respiratory tract. Altimmune anticipates commencing a Phase 1 safety and immunogenicity trial of their candidate in the fourth quarter of 2020.

**Emergent Biosolutions**, with its R&D operations located at 400 Professional Drive, is advancing two treatments for COVID-19, in addition to managing multiple agreements to manufacture potential COVID-19 vaccines for other companies that are hustling to develop and deliver vaccines- including the next two companies on the list.

Clinical trials of **AstraZeneca** and Oxford University's experimental COVID-19 vaccine has resumed in five countries almost a month after being put on hold due to an illness of a British volunteer, while discussions with US authorities continue. Sources say that the data requested by the FDA for one of the most advanced COVID-19 vaccine candidates in development was expected this week.

On September 24, **Novavax** entered late-stage human trials with 10,000 participants in the United Kingdom. A larger Phase 3 trial is in development to launch in the United States in October. Novavax is one of several drug development companies that have received federal government funding under Operation Warp Speed, receiving \$1.6 billion to develop and then manufacture its vaccine if proven successful. Novavax has reached manufacturing partnerships with several companies, including Gaithersburg-based Emergent BioSolutions, and recently purchased its own manufacturing facility in the Czech Republic. [Novavax has said](#) it would have the capacity to produce up to two billion doses a year, once all manufacturing availability is brought online by mid-2021.

The Office of Economic Development has made the commitment to celebrate Economic Development Week in order to emphasize the importance of economic development for the State of Maryland to the general public. The week is designed to increase an understanding of economic development's contribution to the State's business climate, job retention and growth, the tax base and the overall quality of life in Maryland.

To learn more about the Office of Economic Development, please visit [www.growgaithersburg.com](http://www.growgaithersburg.com) and follow on Twitter [@GrowGburg](https://twitter.com/GrowGburg). To learn more about Economic Development Week visit [www.MEDAmd.com](http://www.MEDAmd.com).

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